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Bureau of Land Management
National Park Service
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Federal Subsistence Board News Release



Forest Service

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FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE FISHERY FOR SOCKEYE SALMON CLOSED IN FEDERAL WATERS OF THE HATCHERY CREEK DRAINAGE

THORNE BAY, Alaska – Due to a low sockeye return, the US Forest Service Thorne Bay District Ranger is acting immediately to protect sockeye salmon in the Hatchery Creek drainage on Prince of Wales Island. Effective 12:01 a.m., Tuesday, June 21 and extending through 11:59 p.m., Sunday, August 19, that portion of Hatchery Creek from 100 feet upstream of the upper falls to 100 feet downstream of the lower falls, will be closed to all Federal subsistence fishing. Within the remainder of the drainage, fishing gear will be limited to the use of rod and reel or dip net gear and any sockeye caught must be immediately returned to the water unharmed. On August 1, 2011, users may subsistence fish for coho salmon in the vicinity of the Hatchery Creek falls. Gear is restricted to rod and reel or dip net, and any sockeye caught must be released. Fishing on, from, or within the fish pass at the upper falls is prohibited.

Recent aerial surveys and on the ground observations indicate that the numbers of sockeye returning to Hatchery Creek will likely be below escapement goals. In addition, the returns to Hatchery Creek have been steadily declining over the past decade with extremely low returns noted in 2008 and 2009. In order to ensure sufficient numbers of sockeye salmon reach spawning grounds, subsistence fishing for sockeye salmon within Hatchery Creek, Sweetwater Lake and Barnes Lake is being restricted. If fish counts, taken at the weir one mile upstream of the upper falls and in visual surveys, suggest the run is healthy, then these restrictions may be lifted. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) has also taken action closing both the personal use fishery and the sport fishery within the drainage.

The US Forest Service manages subsistence fisheries in non-marine waters of the Tongass National Forest. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game manages the personal use and sport fisheries in fresh and marine waters of the Tongass National Forest.

For additional information, please contact Jason Anderson (907) 828-3304 or Jeff Reeves at (907) 826-3271. Additional information on the Federal Subsistence Management Program can be found on the web at <http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/home.html>.

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